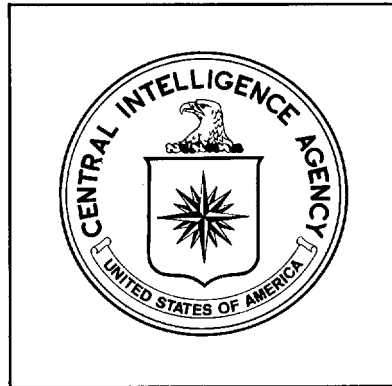


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STAFF NOTES:

Soviet Union Eastern Europe

State Dept. review completed

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SOVIET UNION - EASTERN EUROPE

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the USSR - Eastern Europe Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Brezhnev To Give Main Address At Congress

The Soviet Communist Party Central Committee announced yesterday that General Secretary Brezhnev will deliver the main report at the party congress that opens February 24. Premier Kosygin will speak on the next five-year economic plan (1976-80). This is the standard pattern for a party congress.

The Central Committee did not announce the agenda last April when it set a date for the congress, perhaps because of uncertainty over topics and speakers. The announcement now that Brezhnev will speak indicates that, health permitting, he will be in office through the congress, although it does not carry any implications for the period that follows.

Brezhnev made his customary address to the end-of-the-year plenum yesterday, but the text of his speech probably will not be made public. At the meeting, the Central Committee approved next year's economic plan and budget; the Supreme Soviet begins discussion of them today.



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Yugoslavia: Waiting Out Moscow on the
European Communist Conference

Official and private commentaries from Yugoslav officials strongly suggest that Belgrade sees time running on the side of the independent-minded parties in the preparations for a European Communist Conference.

A Yugoslav editor specializing in foreign affairs told a Western diplomat in mid-November that Belgrade expected the conference to convene in June or July 1976. The editor said that a strengthening of the numbers and unity of those European parties most active in opposing Moscow argues for a stand-pat position in future working sessions.

He rejected the hypothesis that a delayed conference would face the risk of a tougher line by a new, post-Brezhnev leadership after the Soviet party congress in February. The journalist said "We owe Brezhnev nothing. He has violated all understandings we had with him." The editor then enumerated a series of Yugoslav complaints against the current Kremlin leadership, including the revival in October of the "Brezhnev doctrine" in the East German - Soviet friendship treaty and Soviet involvement with the cominformists in Yugoslavia.

This week the Yugoslav party journal *Komunist* carries a long article by Aleksandr Grlickov, Tito's negotiator at the preparatory meetings, which maintains that while the chief obstacle to the conference had been eliminated, "a considerable amount of difficulties" remain. He expressed optimism, however, that if the current procedure of decisions by consensus is followed, the conference could end with historically significant alterations within the communist movement. He insisted that, in any event, no return to old relationships--i.e., subservience to Moscow--is possible, adding that "even the idea of harmonizing the parties' foreign policies" is an anachronism.

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The Romanians and Emigration

Bucharest is in something of a quandary over how to reconcile its tight internal controls with the requirements of MFN and with CSCE provisions on freer movements of people.

In what appears to be a major--although probably temporary--breakthrough, Bucharest approved in November an additional 357 persons for emigration to the US. The total number of those given permission to leave for the US this year now stands at 1,077.

The embassy in Bucharest speculates, and we agree, that this big increase in approvals does not mean there has been a fundamental change in Romania's attitude toward freer emigration. It is more likely a short-term effort to comply with the emigration requirements of the Trade Act, upon which granting of MFN is conditional. Bucharest may also believe that other benefits of closer cooperation with the US can be enhanced by a somewhat more liberal emigration policy.

The relaxation of emigration controls could spell new problems for the Ceausescu regime. The embassy points out that as more Romanians are granted permission to leave, expectations rise among those left behind, and Bucharest may have problems meeting a growing number of requests to emigrate.

The publicity given the freer movement of people and reuniting of families arising from CSCE has boosted popular expectations--in one case, from an unexpected direction. The Romanian consul in Kiev claims that some 20,000 ethnic Romanians in Soviet Moldavia have applied for reunification with their families in Romania. Most applicants, who

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have no first-hand knowledge of conditions across the border, are said to view Romania as a "paradise." Local Soviet officials are reportedly handling the problem by threatening applicants with loss of employment and housing. The situation is difficult for Bucharest, which does not want to countenance discrimination against ethnic Romanians, but fears the consequences of large scale ethnic Romanian emigration on its own minority nationalities and on its historic claim to Soviet Moldavia.

The Romanian consul's story cannot be confirmed, but the US embassy believes it is plausible. The 20,000 figure, however, appears high; it may have been inflated by counting the number of inquiries along with actual applications. [REDACTED]

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Bulgaria Conducts Census
as Belgrade Watches

Sofia is proceeding with a "population and housing census" that, Belgrade fears, will omit a category for Macedonians. Such an omission would end the lull in Yugoslav polemics over the sensitive Macedonian question that has prevailed since Foreign Minister Mladenov visited Belgrade last month (*Staff Notes*, November 14).

The census begins today, but detailed results probably will not be published for at least a year. It is the first survey since 1965, when Sofia reported that only 8,750 citizens had declared themselves "Macedonians." Nine years earlier, 187,729 had so identified themselves. Since the 1965 survey, the Yugoslavs have repeatedly castigated Bulgaria for its policy of "cultural assimilation" of the minorities within its borders. Belgrade also sees Sofia's stubborn refusal to recognize the Macedonians as a separate nationality as a veiled threat to its own Macedonian Republic.

The Bulgarian regime, which recognizes its vulnerability to the Yugoslav charges, has ascribed the decrease in those reporting themselves as Macedonians to a heightened "national consciousness" among all elements of the country's population. The Bulgarians, in announcing the census, said that it is being conducted according to "international norms." This is probably a response to a recent Yugoslav attack on Bulgaria for using terrorist and police state methods to coerce Macedonians into declaring themselves as Bulgarians (*Staff Notes*, November 17).

Belgrade's latest official commentary, although more moderate in tone, nevertheless puts Sofia on notice that the Yugoslavs view the census as a barometer of the current state of bilateral relations. A

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Tanjug press report notes that a census in which "everyone has full freedom to declare his nationality" will be an "indicator of (Bulgaria's) political readiness" to make some headway in resolving the two countries' long-standing dispute.

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